it was not in the least doing - and that had been his notion of his life - anything he himself had conceived."[20] He is unhappy for his "so extremely manipulated state" and for his being "perpetually bent to her (Kate's) will."'[7] In his association with the two young women, he instinctively and unconsciously notes the differences between them, and shows a preference for Milly. In the party given by Milly in Venice. Densher sees Milly dressed in white and looking splendid. Kate asks him if he does not think her "good enough now," and he replies, "Ah, my dear, you know how good 1 think her/'*[8] Milly looks "younger and fairer" than Kate, whom he finds surprisingly "wanting in lustre/' as "a striking young presence she (Kate) was practically superseded."*[9]

As their plot thickens, Kate reveals to Densher the darker depths of her own character, and becomes, unwittingly, the means of his self-discovery and moral regeneration. After the death of Milly, the lovers are "damned civil" to each other, and are all the time aware of the chasm that is opening up between them. After the final interview with Milly, in which he is "forgiven, dedicated, blessed," Densher is intensely aware of something beautiful that has happened to him, which he finds he is unable to describe in words. "The essence was that something had happened to him too beautiful and too sacred to describe."[30] His reawakened moral self has had a vision of an order of goodness, which is timeless and deathless. The spirit of the Dove pervades his consciousness and refines his moral and spiritual self. He does not require to read the last letter of Milly, which he gives unopened to Kate, because he 'knows' what it contains, Kate destroys this missive of grace, and "sickens" Densher by wanting to know if Milly would remember him in her will. Densher moves still further away from Kate, when he extracts the confession from her .that it was she who had sent Lord Mark to Venice to tell Milly of the truth of their betrothal. Kate wants to know why Densher had not

denied the whole thing to Milly. Densher answers, "1 would n't have •made my denial, in such conditions, only to take it back afterwards".
Kate asks Densher, "Oh, you would have broken with me to make your dental a truth? You would have chucked me to save your conscience?",
and Densher replies, "I could n't have done anything less,"[51]

: Slowly but surety, it becomes clear to Densher that Kate is rapacious, diabolical and cruel. But he has the honesty to acknow-
his own ?tyare in the crime, antf will not$_f$ therefore,-
cjrscarcf rjer